considered distinctive and informative by Mantell, Huxley, Owen and other early students of *Iguanodon*. Indeed, Mantell explicitly based his concept of *Iguanodon* on these teeth. For palaeontologists the problem is unfortunately a very common one: in the course of time incomplete but once distinctive type material has become inadequate for identifying the taxon under discussion.

Charig & Chapman propose that *Iguanodon bernissartensis* be designated as the type species, but this proposal is not without problems. Recent authors have recognized the presence of at least two closely related species of *Iguanodon* in Early Cretaceous strata from southeastern England, *I. bernissartensis* and *I. atherfieldensis* Hooley, 1925. David Norman, the foremost student of the genus, believes that the status of these two taxa cannot be resolved (see Norman, 1986; para. 9 of the application) and retains both as well as *I. anglicus* (see Norman & Weishampel, 1992, p. 530). The teeth attributed to *I. anglicus* may yet prove referable to either species (and thus the name *I. anglicus* could become the senior subjective synonym of either) as future work may establish diagnostic features for distinguishing between the teeth of the various species of *Iguanodon*.

In conclusion, I propose that *I. anglicus* be retained as the type species of *Iguanodon*. The tooth BMNH 2392 should be designated the lectotype of *I. anglicus* following Norman (1986; paras. 3 and 4 of the application). The formerly more widely used name *I. mantelli* von Meyer, 1832 (based on Mantell's original material as well as subsequently discovered teeth and bones) is a junior subjective synonym of *I. anglicus* (para. 6 of the application).

I support the proposal by Charig & Chapman to formalize the traditional but informal designation of the almost complete skeleton IRSNB 1534 (specimen Q) from the collections of the Institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles de Belgique in Brussels as the lectotype of *Iguanodon bernissartensis*.

Comments on the proposed conservation of the specific name of *Australopithecus afarensis* Johanson, 1978 (Mammalia, Primates)
(Case 2998; see BZN **53**: 24–27)

(1) Tim White

Department of Integrative Biology, Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, California, U.S.A.

Colin Groves has done anthropology and archaeology a service by bringing this case to the attention of the Commission and other colleagues. As he recognizes, the specific name of *Australopithecus afarensis* Johanson has been entrenched in both the scientific and popular literature since the species was described in 1978. It is nearly universally accepted as intended — to represent a set of Pliocene fossils from Ethiopia and Tanzania. Equally entrenched is the name *A. africanus* Dart, 1925 for a different species represented by South African fossils.

Serious confusion would result from identical specific names (*africanus* Dart, 1925 and *africanus* Weinert, 1950, a senior subjective synonym of *afarensis* Johanson, 1978) being used in different ways by different workers as the fossils comprising these species are shifted from genus to genus. There is no need for this.

Grove's presentation of the case is accurate, his reasonings regarding the potential for confusion and freedom of classification sound, and his solution to the problem workable and timely. I urge the Commission to adopt it.

(2) Paul Renne

Geochronology Center, Berkeley, California, U.S.A. and *Department of Geology, University of California, Berkeley, California, U.S.A.*

I write concerning the proposal by Colin Groves to conserve the specific name of *Australopithecus afarensis*.

I strongly support Groves's proposal, as this would avert needless nomenclatural confusion. A departure from Groves's proposal would be particularly unfortunate (and difficult to implement) because the fossils currently assigned to *A. afarensis* are discussed widely in the geological literature. This literature tends to be less attuned to rigorous formal taxonomic nomenclature than paleontologic literature and replacing the name *afarensis* would virtually guarantee the simultaneous use of different names for the same taxon in different disciplines.

(3) Christopher Stringer

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I have read Colin Groves's application.

I certainly agree with him that there would be considerable potential for confusion were the specific name of *Australopithecus afarensis* Johanson, 1978 to become *africanus* Weinert, 1950 on transferal of the species from *Australopithecus* Dart, 1925 to another genus (para. 6 of the application).

I support the proposal to retain the name *afarensis* whatever the generic placement and to suppress *africanus* Weinert, 1950.

(4) James C. Ohman

Hominid Palaeontology Research Group, Department of Human Anatomy and Cell Biology, New Medical School, University of Liverpool, Ashton Street, Liverpool L69 3GE

Groves has presented a well-argued and accurate case in bringing to light a potentially very serious problem. All those interested in hominid research can be thankful that Groves has called this case to the attention of the Commission and colleagues.

For nearly 75 years the name *Australopithecus africanus* Dart, 1925 has referred to a group of South African fossils. For 20 years the name *A. afarensis* Johanson, 1978 (a junior subjective synonym of *Meganthropus africanus* Weinert, 1950) has meant a group of Pliocene fossils from Ethiopia and Tanzania that clearly represent a different species. Both the names *africanus* Dart and *afarensis* are well-established in both the scientific and popular literature.

Needless confusion would result if these separate species, even though placed in different genera, were to have the same specific name (i.e. *africanus*), as Groves states (para. 6 of the application). I firmly believe that the wise nomenclatural judgement is to accept Groves's proposal to maintain the usage of *afarensis*. I urge the Commission to adopt it.